

Talk with Your Child's Teacher

The academic standards provide a great opportunity for you to talk with teachers about what your child is learning in school and how you can support that learning at home.

Be sure to ask:

About standards

- Can I see an example of a grade level academic standard?
- May I look at some of my child's work related to this standard?
- What kinds of activities and lessons are used in school to help my child meet or exceed this standard?
- What can I do at home to help my child reach the standard?

About your child's progress

- In what subjects is my child working at grade level?
- What areas of learning need improvement?
- Is my child reading at grade level? Can you suggest some books that my child can read?
- Is my child's math performance at grade level? How can I support this at home?
- What do assessments say about my child as a learner?

About ways you can support learning

- Besides report cards, what are other ways I can keep up-to-date on how my child is doing?
- If my child is not at grade level, what support is available at school?
- If my child is at grade level, what enrichment is being offered at school?
- How can I help at home to improve learning?



For more information, contact your child's school or call the MPS Curriculum and Instruction Department at 612.668.5300.



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Useful Links

Minneapolis Public Schools resource websites:

English Language Learners

<http://ell.mpls.k12.mn.us>

Fine Arts

<http://finearts.mpls.k12.mn.us>

Gifted and Talented

<http://giftedandtalented.mpls.k12.mn.us>

Health and Physical Education

<http://healthphyed.mpls.k12.mn.us>

Information Technology

<http://its.mpls.k12.mn.us>

Literacy

<http://elementaryliteracy.mpls.k12.mn.us>

Mathematics

<http://math.mpls.k12.mn.us>

Science

<http://science.mpls.k12.mn.us>

Social Studies

<http://socialstudies.mpls.k12.mn.us>

World Languages

<http://worldlanguages.mpls.k12.mn.us>



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Parent Guide to Fourth Grade

Grade 4

Building on a Solid Foundation of Knowledge



MPS works hard to make every school a great school. We have compiled examples of skills that students should know and goals or tasks they should be able to accomplish by the end of each grade. Take a look at the academic standards set for students in fourth grade. These standards provide a common understanding of the foundational skills and knowledge needed for all students to be prepared to move forward to the next grade and on to continued learning and academic success.



Positive teacher-to-student and student-to-student relationships support emotional and social development and are essential to successful learning. You can help. When schools work together with families and the community to support learning, children will succeed in school and in the future.

LITERACY

By the end of the school year, we expect that a fourth-grade student will:

- Read unfamiliar words by using strategies to sound out or by looking for clues in the context
- Identify main ideas and important details in nonfiction works
- Distinguish fact from opinion
- Determine cause and effect and draw personal conclusions
- Read and discuss a variety of high quality, classic and contemporary literary works specific to America
- Read books or stories from other countries
- Read a variety of fiction, poetic and nonfiction books for enjoyment
- Create multiple paragraph compositions (introduction, support evidence, conclusion)
- Use the writing process that includes prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing
- Apply the correct rules of grammar and spelling
- Give oral presentations for a variety of purposes
- Confirm an understanding of another speaker's presentation by paraphrasing what was said

Learning activities you can do at home:

The following strategies may be practiced in your family's native language as well as in English:

- Find purposes for reading at home. Ask your child to find information about a new movie, read directions for assembling a new toy, read a menu or find a business in the yellow pages.
- Set aside regular time for reading in your family, independent of schoolwork.
- Set aside a special place for your child to keep his/her own books.
- Check out booklists of stories read in several languages. Visit Hennepin County Library website: www.hclib.org
- Ask to see writing done at school. Give specific and positive feedback. ("I like the way you described the puppy.")

MATHEMATICS

SCIENCE

SOCIAL STUDIES

By the end of the school year, we expect that a fourth-grade student will:

- Add, subtract, multiply and divide whole numbers
- Read, write and represent whole numbers up to 100,000
- Find 1,000 or 10,000 more or less than any given five-digit number
- Add fractions with like denominators
- Compare and order decimals and whole numbers
- Design, explore and use graphs and number patterns
- Calculate area and perimeter
- Collect, organize, display and interpret numerical data
- Evaluate the likelihood of events

Learn how to design experiments, organize and analyze data, use evidence to form a conclusion and demonstrate an understanding of concepts as he/she explores:

Water

- Observe and explore properties of water in liquid, solid and gaseous forms
- Learn how water can be used to do work
- Understand the importance of water in our lives

Earth Materials

- Learn techniques used by geologists to identify rocks and minerals
- Investigate the basic materials from which the earth is made
- Look for the properties of rocks

Terrestrial Food Chains

- Investigate simple food chains by experimenting and maintaining plant and animal populations
- Document the changes of plants and aphids over time
- Measure plant growth over time and predict future growth
- Communicate an understanding of delicate ecosystems

Magnetism and Electricity

- Learn how magnets display forces of attraction and repulsion
- Learn how to make an electromagnet
- Identify materials that are conductors and insulators

- Compare and contrast primary and secondary sources of information
- Create a variety of maps
- Locate and describe major physical and cultural features of the regions of the earth
- Explore how human settlement has changed the United States
- Use geographic terms to describe physical and cultural features of Minnesota
- Observe how humans interact with and are influenced by the environment
- Locate major physical and cultural features of Minnesota and analyze each feature's importance in the development of the state
- Engage in a research project. Analyze various sources of information and organize the research findings into a presentation
- Understand the rights and responsibilities as a citizen of the United States
- Analyze and interpret how cultural perceptions, settlement patterns and physical processes impact the different regions of the United States

Learning activities you can do at home:

The following strategies may be practiced in your family's native language as well as in English:

- Take inventory of things that use electricity in your home.
- Use a small magnet to "test" metal objects in the house.
- Dismantle and discover what is inside a small electric toy or appliance.
- Discuss and practice water conservation at home.
- Find ways to slow the melting process of an ice cube. Chart and discuss the results.
- Start a family rock collection. Ask, relatives and friends to bring you a rock from their hometown. Discuss the similarities and differences in the collection.

The following strategies may be practiced in your family's native language as well as in English:

- Keep a personal journal or atlas locating places discussed locally, nationally and internationally.
- Find books about important people and events in United States history.
- Visit the Minnesota Historical Society website to learn more about the state's history: www.mnhs.org
- Examine the labels on the clothes you wear. Where were they made?
- Talk about sources of your food. Why do bananas come from Central America? Why does the milk come from the local dairy? How did the food get to your house?
- Help your child find your family's countries of origin and chart the birthplaces of relatives on a map. You can plot the routes they followed before arriving at their present locations. Why did they leave their previous home? Where do all your relatives live now?

The following strategies may be practiced in your family's native language as well as in English:

- Practice basic facts at home.
- Ask your child to help you with recipe adjustments.
- Have your child calculate discounts and total purchases at the store.
- Try to determine the outcome of multiple coin tosses.
- Create number sequences with both correct and incorrect answers. Ask your child to determine if they are true or false.
- Have your child measure the perimeter (distance around an enclosed figure) of each room in your house and then find the area (length x width = ? sq. units) of each room.
- Look for graphs, tables and charts in magazines and newspapers. Discuss the data.
- Watch the weather forecast and play games of chance. ("How many inches of snow will fall?", "How hot will it get tomorrow?")

Fourth-graders experience a broad range of instruction that supports and enriches academic learning and understanding.

Arts Education is creating, performing and responding through Visual and Performing Arts. Fourth-graders learn to:

- Use the elements and principles of art to create, reflect on and solve visual art problems
- Improvise and compose longer phrases of music
- Demonstrate combinations of movement alone and within a group

Health is developing the skills, knowledge and confidence to make good choices for personal health. Fourth-graders learn to:

- Identify ways to resolve conflict at home, in school and with friends
- Use first aid to help a victim who is choking, including demonstrating the Heimlich maneuver

- Demonstrate the ability to plan healthy meals and snacks that emphasize the principles of the Food Pyramid
- Create rational counter-arguments for pressure to use tobacco, alcohol and other drugs

Physical Education is developing the skills, knowledge and confidence to make good decisions for personal fitness. Fourth-graders learn to:

- Identify how physical activities reduce stress
- Demonstrate mature motor skills while participating in physical activities
- Count heart rate before and after activity
- Describe the effects of exercise on bones and muscles

World Languages is learning to communicate in another language and appreciate other cultures. Using the target language, fourth-graders learn to:

- Engage in common classroom interactions
- Comprehend brief written and oral messages on familiar topics
- Write or tell peers about products and/or practices

Instructional Media and Technology is helping students learn to:

- Analyze information, charts, maps and graphs
- Understand that creators of media have ownership rights (copyright) that must be respected
- Select the best way to communicate information
- Appropriately use Internet search engines as following district and building technology policies

